DARK AVENGERS®

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DARK AVENGERS

NORMAN OSBORN, FORMER THUNDERBOLTS LEADER, HAS RISEN TO POWER AND WAS APPOINTED TO REPLACE TONY STARK AS HEAD OF THE NATIONAL PEACEKEEPING TASK FORCE, H.A.M.M.E.R., WHICH INCLUDES HIS OWN TEAM OF AVENGERS.

THEY'RE A GATHERING OF CONTROVERSIAL FIGURES THAT NORMAN HAS GIVEN THE ICONIC LIKENESSES OF MANY OF THE FAMOUS AVENGERS, AS WELL AS THE SECRET IDENTITIES THAT GO WITH THEM. JOINING FORMER MIGHTY AVENGERS ARES AND SENTRY ARE THE ASSASSIN BULLSEYE, NOW HAWKEYE; REFORMED CRIMINAL MOONSTONE, NOW MS. MARVEL; WOLVERINE'S DISTURBED SON DAKEN, NOW WOLVERINE; VENOM TRANSFORMED INTO A NEW SPIDER-MAN; AND NORMAN UNVEILED HIS NEW IDENTITY...THE IRON PATRIOT.

NORMAN IS ALSO TRYING TO HELP THE POWERFUL SENTRY DEAL WITH HIS DEMONS WHILE HE CONTINUES TO DEAL WITH HIS OWN. HOW HE HAS BEEN DOING THIS HAS REMAINED A MYSTERY...

THE SENTRY HAS DIED TWICE. ONCE DURING BATTLE AND ONCE AT THE HAND OF HIS OWN LONG-SUFFERING WIFE, LINDY. NO ONE KNOWS HOW HE SURVIVED BOTH FATAL ATTACKS.

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CIRCA 1600 BCE.
THE LORD SPOKE TO ME AND HE SAID: I WILL BRING ONE MORE PLAGUE ON PHARAOH AND ON EGYPT.
HE SAID: YOU MUST GO AND MARK WITH LAMB'S BLOOD THE DOORPOSTS OF EVERY HEBREW DOOR.
THEN AND ONLY THEN WILL THE LORD KNOW THIS IS A HEBREW HOUSE. HE WILL THEN KNOW TO PASS OVER IT.
AND HE WILL THEN SPARE ALL THE ISRAELITE FIRSTBORN.
WHILE EVERY FIRSTBORN SON IN EGYPT WILL DIE.
FROM THE FIRSTBORN SON OF PHARAOH, TO THE FIRSTBORN SON OF THE SLAVE.
THEN YOU WILL KNOW...

...THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD.

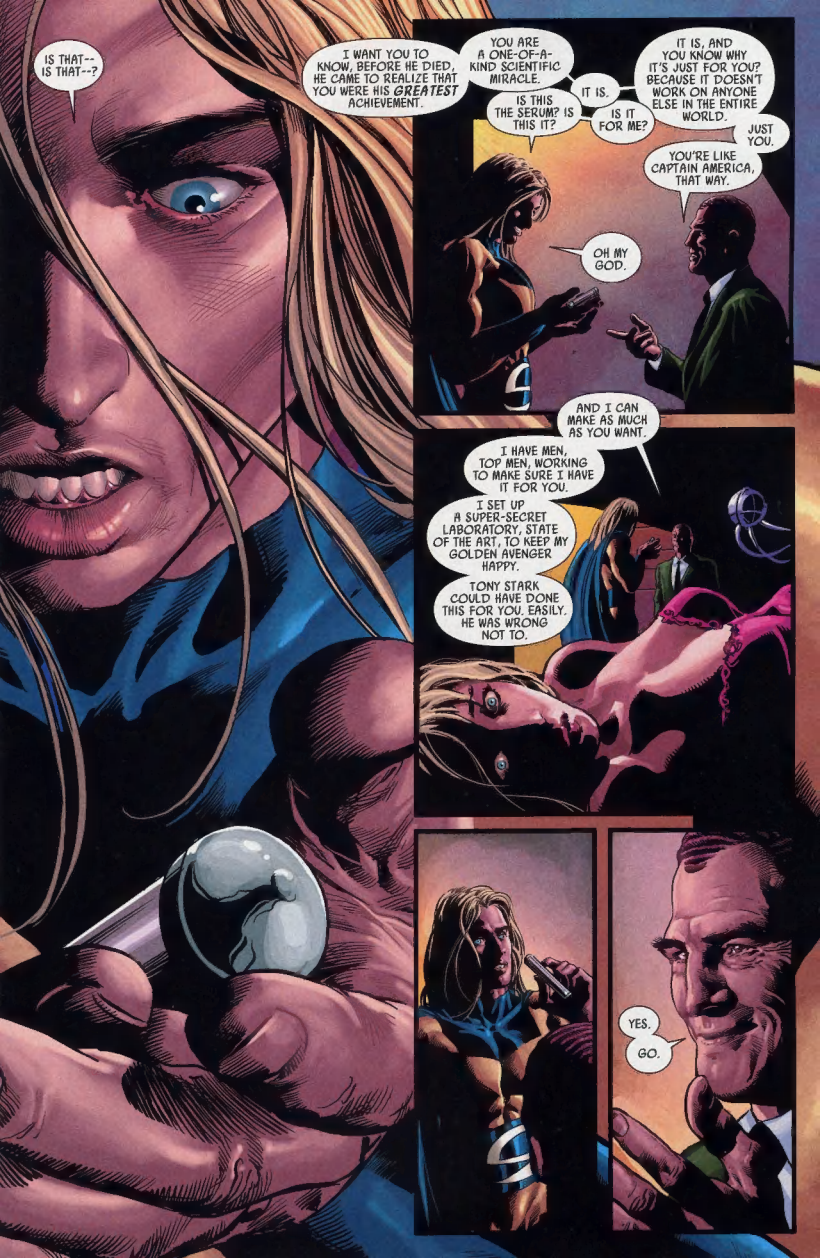
TWO MONTHS AGO.
BECAUSE NO ONE HAS UNDERSTOOD YOU LIKE I DO.
BELIEVE ME, ROBERT, THIS ROAD WE'RE ON, IT'S A TOUGH ONE, BUT WHEN IT WORKS...
WHEN THOSE MOMENTS HAPPEN...
IT'S ALL WORTH IT.

VICTORIA, THIS IS OSBORN. I WANT YOU TO SEND SOMEONE OUT TO 5 GUYS BURGERS AND FRIES.
ORDER FOR EVERYONE: CHEESEBURGERS, SHAKES, FRIES, BACON BURGERS, ONION RINGS...
ORDER EVERYTHING THEY'VE GOT. LET ME KNOW WHEN IT'S HERE.
WHAT? NO, I'M NOT JOKING.

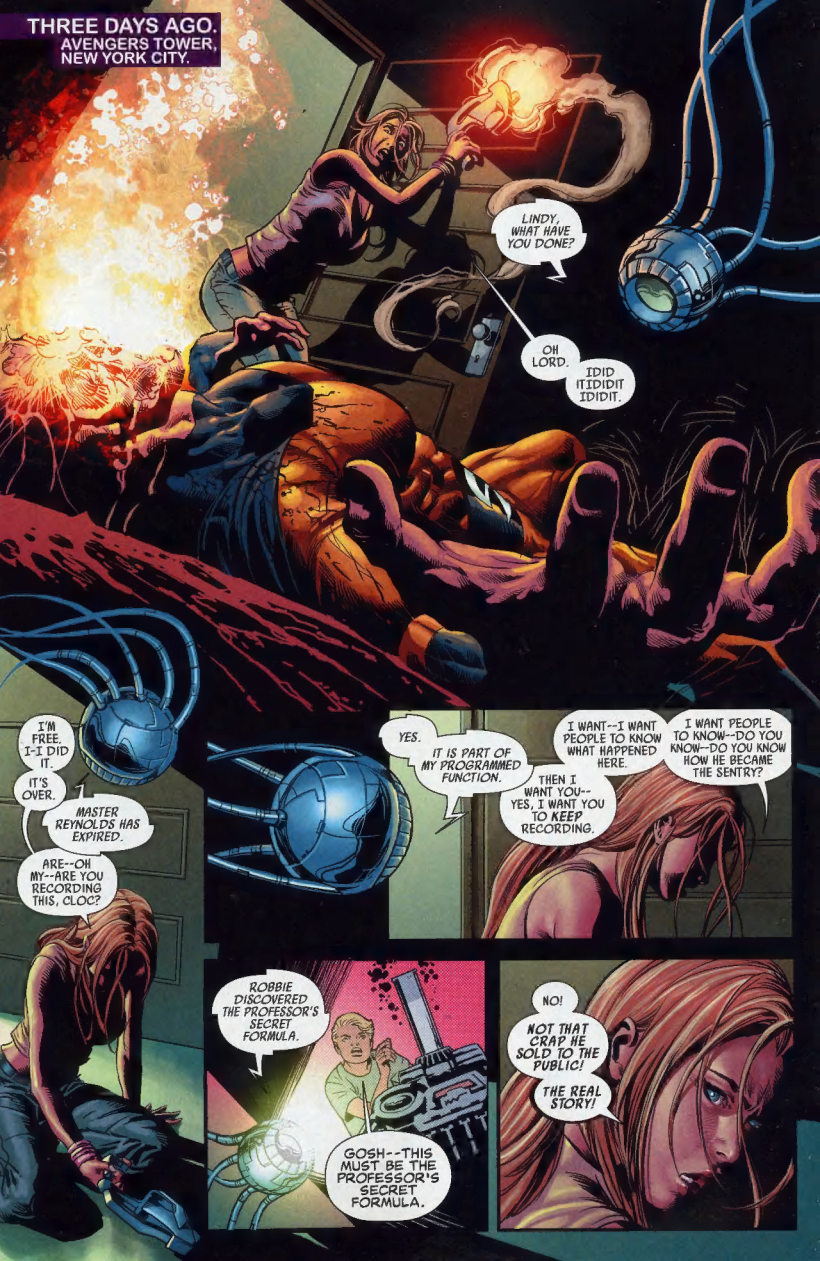
5 GUYS BURGERS.
YOU'RE GOING TO FAINT FROM HAPPINESS.
THANK YOU. FOR THIS.

NO WORRIES.
LISTEN, I HAVE SOMETHING ELSE FOR YOU.
SOMETHING I THINK WILL MAKE YOU VERY HAPPY.

AS I SAID, YOUR FILE WAS VERY THOROUGH, AND BEFORE I CAME TO VISIT YOU I WENT THROUGH ALL THE FILES...
OF THE MAN YOU CALLED "THE PROFESSOR."


IS THAT--
IS THAT--?
I WANT YOU TO KNOW, BEFORE HE DIED, HE CAME TO REALIZE THAT YOU WERE HIS GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT.
YOU ARE A ONE-OF-A-KIND SCIENTIFIC MIRACLE.
IS THIS THE SERUM? IS THIS IT?
IT IS.
IS IT FOR ME?
IT IS, AND YOU KNOW WHY IT'S JUST FOR YOU? BECAUSE IT DOESN'T WORK ON ANYONE ELSE IN THE ENTIRE WORLD.
JUST YOU.
YOU'RE LIKE CAPTAIN AMERICA, THAT WAY.
OH MY GOD.
AND I CAN MAKE AS MUCH AS YOU WANT.
I HAVE MEN, TOP MEN, WORKING TO MAKE SURE I HAVE IT FOR YOU.
I SET UP A SUPER-SECRET LABORATORY, STATE OF THE ART, TO KEEP MY GOLDEN AVENGER HAPPY.
TONY STARK COULD HAVE DONE THIS FOR YOU. EASILY. HE WAS WRONG NOT TO.
YES.
GO.

MMMAAGGH!!
OH MY.
EVERYTHING... ALL RIGHT?
I REALLY NEEDED THAT.
YOU WANT TO SIT DOWN?
NO.
NO...
GARR!
MISTER OSBORN, I CLEARLY--MMM!
I OWE YOU ONE.
WHAT?
YES, YOU DO. AND YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MAKES YOU?
MY SECRET WEAPON.


THREE DAYS AGO.
AVENGERS TOWER, NEW YORK CITY.
LINDY, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
OH LORD.
IDID ITIDIDIT IDIDIT.
I'M FREE. I-I DID IT.
IT'S OVER.
MASTER REYNOLDS HAS EXPIRED.
ARE--OH MY--ARE YOU RECORDING THIS, CLOC?
YES.
IT IS PART OF MY PROGRAMMED FUNCTION.
I WANT--I WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED HERE.
THEN I WANT YOU--YES, I WANT YOU TO KEEP RECORDING.
I WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW--DO YOU KNOW--DO YOU KNOW HOW HE BECAME THE SENTRY?
ROBBIE DISCOVERED THE PROFESSOR'S SECRET FORMULA.
GOSH--THIS MUST BE THE PROFESSOR'S SECRET FORMULA.
NO!
NOT THAT CRAP HE SOLD TO THE PUBLIC!
THE REAL STORY!

"DO YOU KNOW HOW HE EVEN ENDED UP IN THAT LAB IN THE FIRST PLACE? DO YOU KNOW HOW?
"HE BROKE IN THERE LOOKING FOR DRUGS. LOOKING FOR--FOR-- FOR METH WORKS.
"HE WAS AN ADDICT.
"HE WAS A JUNKIE.
"AND GUESS WHAT? AS ONLY A JUNKIE CAN, HE FELL ASS-BACKWARDS INTO ACCIDENTALLY DISCOVERING HIS ULTIMATE DRUG.
"THE ULTIMATE HIGH.
"HE FOUND WHAT HE CALLED A--A SERUM.
DO NOT TOUCH
"BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS.
SHATTH
WHOA.
WHAT IS IT?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I WANT SOME.

"AN UNTESTED SOMETHING THAT EVENTUALLY TURNED HIM INTO THIS--WHAT?
"DO WE KNOW? DOES HE EVEN KNOW?
"WHAT DID HE TURN INTO? WHAT EXACTLY IS THE POWER OF A THOUSAND EXPLODING SUNS?
"WHAT *IS* THE SENTRY?
DUDE!

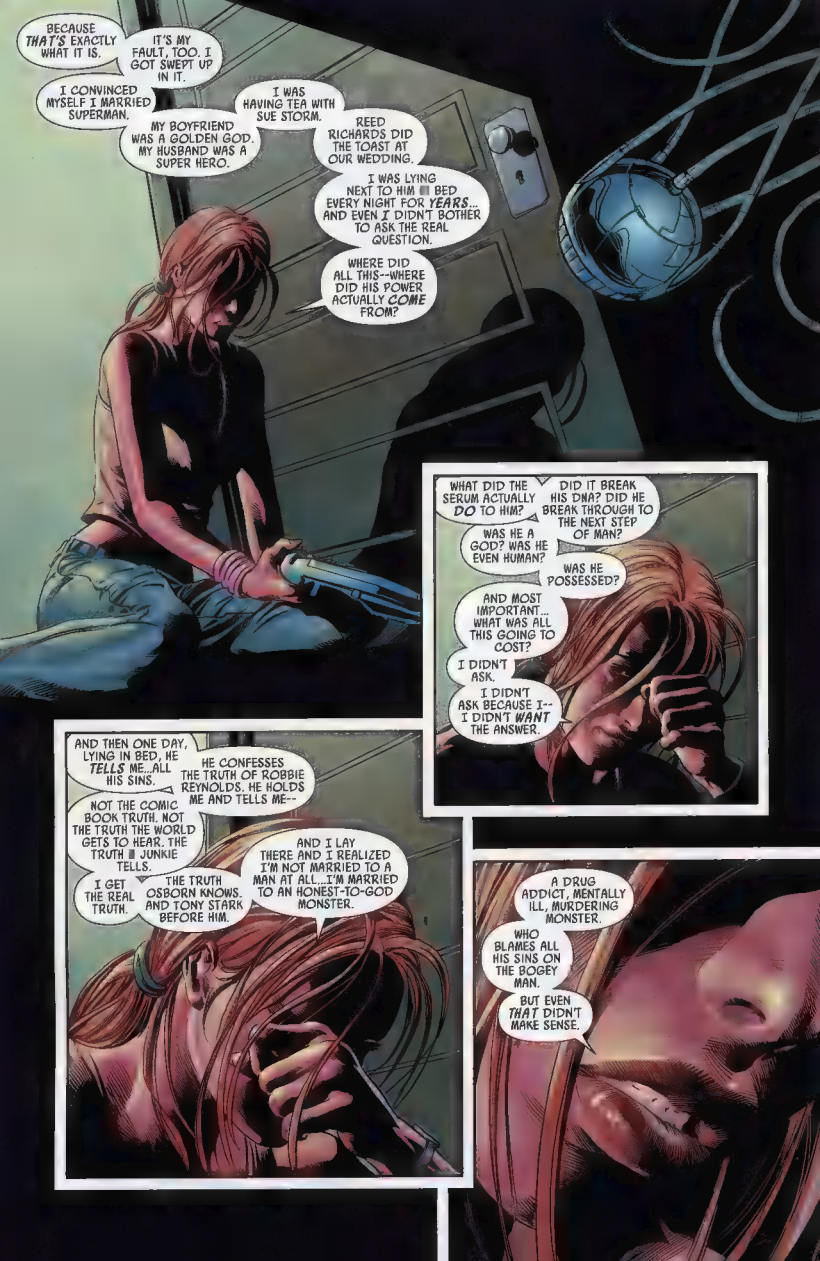
DUDE?!
AAGGH!!
SMASSHH

NGGAA!

HANDS IN THE AIR!
WE HAVE A BREAK-IN!
OH, MAN!
BUILDING NINE TH-THE LAB. OVER?
IN THE AIR!

"AND YOU KNOW WHAT?
"YOU KNOW THE REAL BIG SECRET OF THE SENTRY?

OH, MY. OH, MY OH, MY OH, MY.
"HE DIDN'T JUST TAKE THAT SERUM ONCE.
"ONCE WAS AN ACCIDENT. ONCE WAS A STUPID KID DOING A STUPID THING.
POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS
POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS
WAS THIS YOUR LAB, SIR?
YES--YES. MY LIFE'S WORK.
BUT IT'S ALL--IT'S ALL...
CAN YOU FIX IT?
I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO. WON'T I?
"HIS SECRET IS: ONCE HE GOT A TASTE OF IT--OF THE POWER--HE DID WHAT EVERY JUNKIE DOES.
YOU CAN MAKE MORE?
"HE DID WHATEVER HE COULD TO GET WHATEVER HE NEEDED.
"DOES THAT *SOUND* LIKE THE ORIGIN OF A GOLDEN SUPER HERO TO YOU?
"NO? THEN WHAT *DOES* IT SOUND LIKE THE ORIGIN OF?
"THEN WHAT DOES IT SOUND LIKE?"


BECAUSE THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT IS.
IT'S MY FAULT, TOO. I GOT SWEPT UP IN IT.
I CONVINCED MYSELF I MARRIED SUPERMAN.
I WAS HAVING TEA WITH SUE STORM.
MY BOYFRIEND WAS A GOLDEN GOD. MY HUSBAND WAS A SUPER HERO.
REED RICHARDS DID THE TOAST AT OUR WEDDING.
I WAS LYING NEXT TO HIM ■ BED EVERY NIGHT FOR YEARS... AND EVEN I DIDN'T BOTHER TO ASK THE REAL QUESTION.
WHERE DID ALL THIS--WHERE DID HIS POWER ACTUALLY COME FROM?
WHAT DID THE SERUM ACTUALLY DO TO HIM?
DID IT BREAK HIS DNA? DID HE BREAK THROUGH TO THE NEXT STEP OF MAN?
WAS HE A GOD? WAS HE EVEN HUMAN?
WAS HE POSSESSED?
AND MOST IMPORTANT... WHAT WAS ALL THIS GOING TO COST?
I DIDN'T ASK.
I DIDN'T ASK BECAUSE I-- I DIDN'T WANT THE ANSWER.
AND THEN ONE DAY, LYING IN BED, HE TELLS ME...ALL HIS SINS.
HE CONFESSES THE TRUTH OF ROBBIE REYNOLDS. HE HOLDS ME AND TELLS ME--
NOT THE COMIC BOOK TRUTH. NOT THE TRUTH THE WORLD GETS TO HEAR. THE TRUTH ■ JUNKIE TELLS.
I GET THE REAL TRUTH.
THE TRUTH OSBORN KNOWS. AND TONY STARK BEFORE HIM.
AND I LAY THERE AND I REALIZED I'M NOT MARRIED TO A MAN AT ALL...I'M MARRIED TO AN HONEST-TO-GOD MONSTER.
A DRUG ADDICT, MENTALLY ILL, MURDERING MONSTER.
WHO BLAMES ALL HIS SINS ON THE BOGEY MAN.
BUT EVEN THAT DIDN'T MAKE SENSE.

"HE DRESSED THE PART. HE LOOKED THE PART.
"BUT I REALIZED THAT I'VE MET TRUE HEROES, I'VE SEEN THEM UP CLOSE...
"I'VE SEEN WHAT KIND OF *SPECIAL* IT TAKES TO STAND FOR SOMETHING LARGER THAN HIMSELF.
"I'VE SEEN WHAT KIND OF *SPECIAL* MAN IT TAKES TO WIELD POWER. TO CONTROL IT. TO NOT LET IT CONTROL YOU.
"IT TAKES A SPECIAL MAN OF INTEGRITY AND SPIRIT.
"A *'ONE IN A MILLION'* MAN.
"AND MAYBE YOU CAN BLAME BOB FOR NOT BEING THAT MAN, AND MAYBE THAT'S JUST NOT FAIR--BUT HE *NEVER* WAS.
"HE WAS *NEVER* CAPTAIN AMERICA. ONLY CAPTAIN AMERICA IS, REALLY.
"THAT'S WHAT MAKES HIM CAPTAIN AMERICA.
"BOB WAS NOT AND NEVER WOULD BE *THAT* GUY. HE WASN'T WIRED THAT WAY. HE WAS SOMETHING ELSE.
"BUT THEN I REALIZED THAT--THAT AN ADDICT IS AN ADDICT.
"INSTEAD OF DRUGS... IT BECAME ABOUT POWER. HE WAS ADDICTED TO THE SENTRY.
"AND HE HAD JUST AS MUCH *CONTROL* OVER *THAT* AS HE DID THE OTHER.
"SO THAT ANSWERS THE QUESTION, RIGHT? WHO IS THE SENTRY? WHO IS THE VOID?
"IT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T DESERVE THE POWER GETS THE POWER."

AND IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, IT'S AMAZING THAT IT HASN'T HAPPENED MORE OFTEN.
I HAVE A THEORY.
I THINK BOB, WHEN HE DRANK THAT DRUG, ACCIDENTALLY OPENED UP... SOMETHING.
HE BECAME A PART OF SOMETHING LARGER AND CRAZIER THAN ANYONE HAS EVEN CONSIDERED.
"I THINK HIS ENERGY CAME FROM SOMETHING OF--OF MAYBE BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS.
"MOSES, JESUS, WHAT WAS THEIR POWER? WHERE DID IT COME FROM? HOW DID THEY GET IT? REALLY?
"GOD? BUT STILL, HOW? WHAT WOULD POWERFUL PEOPLE LIKE *THAT* LOOK LIKE *TODAY?*
"I KNOW. IT'S SACRILEGE. CRAZY. I KNOW. AND I HAVE NO PROOF."
JUST SUNDAY SCHOOL.
THAT'S WHY I NEVER SAID ANYTHING TO ANYONE.
BUT THOSE MEN HAD POWER AND IT DESTROYED THEM.
"THEY WERE SACRIFICED.
"*WHAT'S* THE DIFFERENCE, EXACTLY?"
NOOOOO...
I'VE MISS YOU, LYDIA.
IT'S... OKAY.
I SHOULD HAVE KILLED HIM ON OUR WEDDING NIGHT.
OBVIOUSLY. IT HURTS TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT.

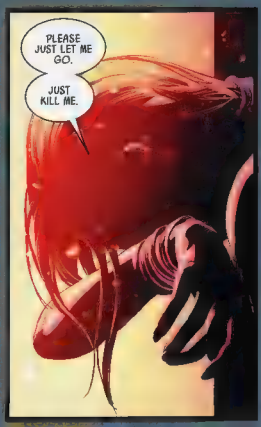
IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'VE PUT MORE INTO THIS MARRIAGE THAN
OH GOD!
OH GOD!
WHAT ARE YOU??!!
I AM GALACTUS... DEVOURER OF WORLDS.
NOOO...
OH, LINDY, NO.

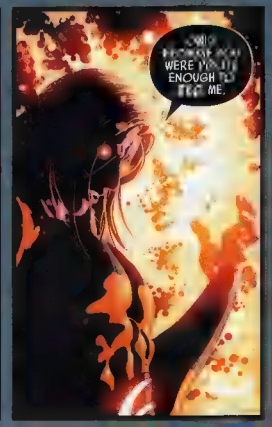
SKRASSH
AAIIEE!!

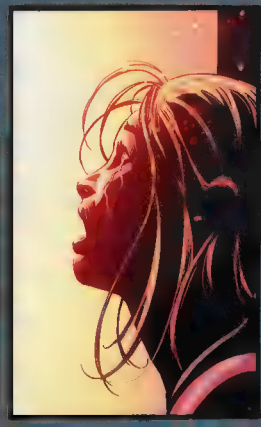
I KNOW, YOU'RE NOT TAKING THE EASY WAY OUT OF THIS MARRIAGE.
I WANT SOME MORE OF THESE THEORIES OF YOURS. THEY'RE HILARIOUS.

PLEASE, PLEASE LET ME GO!
PLEASE!
YOU WANT OUT OF THIS? REALLY WANT TO GET AWAY FROM ME? IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
PLEASE.
YOU'RE ONLY STILL HERE BECAUSE HE LOVES YOU.
AND HE DOES.

AND I'VE DONE NOTHING BUT
HE TOLD YOU HIS DEEPEST, DARKEST SECRET!
YOU SEE ME AS THE ENEMY. YOU'RE THE ENEMY!
YOU'RE THE BETRAYER!
YOU MADE A PROMISE, LINDY. YOU'RE A LIAR!


PLEASE JUST LET ME GO.
JUST KILL ME.


WERE YOU EVER ENOUGH TO STOP ME.



NO! YOU PROMISED.
WE HAD A DEAL!
NOT HER!
YOU DON'T TOUCH HER.
THAT WAS THEN.
NO!
YOU DON'T TOUCH HER.
I THINK WE CAN ALL AGREE THAT YOUR LIFE WILL BE
WITHOUT HER.
NO!
NO!
SHE DOESN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE!!
YOU DON'T TOUCH HER.
AS ALWAYS...
YOU WILL THANK ME LATER.

NO!!
NOW YOU SEE...
...HOW MUCH HE LOVES YOU.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, ROBERT?
YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T RUN FROM ME.
YOU'VE TRIED THAT BEFORE.

ROBERT?
THIS ISN'T GOING TO WORK.
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH NOW?
YOU TRIED TO MAKE THE WORLD FORGET WE EXISTED... THAT DIDN'T WORK.
YOU TRIED TO CONVINCE ME I'D NEVER EXISTED. WHAT? THAT DIDN'T GO AWAY?
YOU TRIED TO KILL ME. NOTHING.
YOU KNEW ALL THE WAY TO THE END THAT NONE OF THAT WOULD WORK.
AND NOW THIS?
YOU'VE TRIED THIS, RIGHT?

BOB?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
ROBERT?

ROBERT, OH, NO, NO NO NO.
YOU'D KILL YOURSELF TO GET RID OF ME?
THIS IS THE ACT OF A COWARD!
YOU'RE HALF PROVING HER POINT.
YOU WANT TO BE A HERO? THIS IS HARDLY WHAT HEROES DO. THIS IS WHAT COWARDS DO.
BUT THAT'S OKAY. I'M NOT ARGUING YOU. I'M JUST TELLING YOU WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW.
SO YOU'RE NOT A PART OF ME.
YOU'RE A FORCE. LINDY WAS RIGHT. YOU'RE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER THAN BOTH OF US.
YOU ARE GOD.
AND ROBERT, I HATE TO BE THE ONE TO TELL THIS TO YOU, ESPECIALLY NOW, SINCE YOU WENT TO ALL THIS TROUBLE...
BUT THIS ISN'T GOING TO WORK.
YOU DON'T WANT IT ENOUGH.
YOU'RE JUST PUNISHING YOURSELF TO PUNISH YOURSELF.
NOW, WHAT YOU SHOULD BE DOING IS LISTENING TO THAT MOUTH OF A WIFE OF YOURS.
SHE WAS MAKING SENSE.

YOU'RE ANGRY BECAUSE SHE WAS RIGHT. YOU'RE *NOT* A HERO.
YOU'RE NOT.
IT'S NICE THAT YOU WANT TO BE, BUT YOU'RE NOT.
WHO *WOULDN'T* WANT TO BE A SUPER HERO? OR A DRUMMER OR PRESIDENT?
YOU'RE NOT.

YOU'RE ME. AND INSTEAD OF FIGHTING ME (WITH NO RESULT...)
YOU SHOULD JUST TAKE A STEP BACK AND LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED AS THE SENTRY.
NOTHING.

NOTHING HAS HAPPENED.
YOU'VE MADE A MESS OUT OF EVERYTHING YOU'VE COME NEAR.
YOU HIDE. YOU MOPE. YOU RUN.
AND ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS JUST SIT BACK AND LET ME DO WHAT I DO.

YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING? YOU WANT TO HAVE AN IMPACT?
ALLOW ME.
I'VE DONE IT BEFORE.
AND SOMETHING GOOD ALWAYS CAME OUT OF IT IN THE LONG RUN.
YES. SURE.
IT'S A MESSY THING.

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IT'S GOD'S WAY.
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT ISSUE!

DARK AVENGERS #14
THE VOID RISING!

SECRET WARRIORS #12
HIVE MIND!

NEW AVENGERS #61
CAP SEZ:
JOIN THE SIEGE!

SIEGE: EMBEDDED #1
ON THE FRONT LINE
OF SIEGE!

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